

**MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY ASSOCIATION  
OF ADMINISTRATIVE AND SERVICE FACULTY MEET and CONFER**  
**Thursday, May 7, 2020 | 1:15-2:45 p.m.**  
**Zoom**

**Present: President Davenport, Melissa Iverson, Matt Cecil, David Jones, Steve Barrett, Rick Straka, Lynn Akey, Brian Martensen, Mark Johnson, Henry Morris, Rachel Tanquist, Deb Schulz, Tracy Stokes-Hernandez, Amanda Weister, Gina Maahs-Zurbey, Bobby Fleischman, Carolyn Nelson, Marie Slotemaker, Sheri Sargent, Sarah Frazier**

**Meeting Chair –Mel Iverson, MSUAASF President**

**I. Information Items**

A. Review of Notes

- No changes noted. If changes need to be made they can be recommended to the MSUAASF President.

B. MSU President's Report (R. Davenport)

- R. Davenport recognizes ASF members increased workloads this summer due to COVID-19
- R. Davenport talked with student government representatives. He expressed his appreciation at their ability to make progress towards their programs in this dire situation. He recognizes that student success is only possible because of what ASF members do and he thanks us for going the extra mile.
- There are three pending scenarios going forward to fall. 1) Everything is back to normal (which would be ideal) 2) Everything is still online (worst case scenario) 3) Hybrid model with a combination of live and remote instruction. We are preparing for all three scenarios.
- We are ready for ready for all summer online classes thanks to M. Cecil, and the work of deans, and others.
- R. Davenport attended the Presidents' Council Leadership Meeting for two days, where the seven university presidents and all the two-year college presidents met to discuss how each university is approaching these challenges. All universities are looking to go forward in a similar fashion. The seven university presidents met privately with chancellor and provost to prepare for fall and the financial and emotional issues/challenges that remain even after the pandemic has left us.
- R. Davenport has never seen presidents come together so well as they currently are since we are all in this together. They are figuring this out together and sharing best practices. R. Davenport is optimistic, but there are huge challenges.
- We are unsure what the legislature will do regarding raising tuition for the upcoming school year. This could also change at the board level.
- The GOP is threatening to not honor bargaining settlements statewide. Governor Walz will fight against this, but we have no idea how this will roll out. Statewide, we have a number of financial issues where we've burned through the reserve money we have and we now have a 2.4 billion dollar deficit to cover.
- R. Straka added that we went from a 1.6 billion dollar surplus to a 2.4 billion deficit. The state has a rainy day fund of 2.3 billion, but this doesn't cover the entire deficit and they won't spent the entire rainy day fund. There will have to be legislative action to cover the deficit.
- We also don't know what will occur with the bonding bill that includes HEAPR money for Armstrong Hall or our NextGen project funding. We have support from the governor and the house, but these projects are a bargaining chip for republicans. They have to agree to the bonding recommendations, which will carry this session into another session this summer. R. Davenport expects success of the bonding bill, however Armstrong is in the middle of the list so it may or may not get funding.
- If negotiated salaries for all bargaining units don't get acted upon by the end of June, all salary raises are void.
- There are checks and balances to opening back up campus. We want people back to work in a safe environment.
- R. Davenport thanks D. Jones taking the lead in creating tactical and strategic plans for summer and fall with goals and challenges in place to make sure we are successful.
- R. Davenport and the cabinet will keep the lines of communication open and will provide lots of communication throughout the summer.

- While we tend to look at problems on a year-to-year or biennial, basis, we need to look onto the horizon, because we will have large financial problems in 2022 and 2023 if we don't get moving now.
- Financially MNSU has been stable up until now, so you can only imagine where our less stable peers are at. We'll do what we can to get through this year; it's next year that we are concerned about.
- Academic Affairs is approximately 2/3 to 70% of our budget. Under M. Cecil's leadership, we are looking at what we can do to balance our budget. Cuts are not all coming from administration and staff, they are coming from all sides.
- M. Cecil thanks ASF for all of our work and implementing the quick changes we're doing. M. Cecil's conversation with the council of deans emphasized programs with the most strategic potential to grow and how we can still focus on investments there. They are looking forward towards the job markets and where students will go to work, so that we can put our university in the best position to grow. They are looking seriously at where they need to grow high demand programs, while maintaining a strong liberal arts and social sciences core. It is a complicated puzzle, but they will come out with a solid plan. They want to involve ASF members to understand where we can grow, especially from academic advising areas to understand what our students want and need.
- In the short run, there will be significant sacrifices in academic affairs. They reviewed all searches and suspended many searches because they don't know what the budget situation will be for fall. Involve ASF membership to understand where we can grow.
- R. Davenport congratulated a number of people recognized by the system office. J. Egeland received the Outstanding Service R. Davenport thanks J. Egeland for her hard work since it reflects well on our university. Six faculty members were also recognized as outstanding educators, which reflects well on the quality and excellence of our institution.
- Graduation is on Saturday. Graduates received a graduation box with important items to commemorate the occasion. Over 2,000 students are graduating and can participate in video form. Thank you to K. Clark and his team for their efforts.
- R Davenport thanked ASF members for all that we do on behalf of our students.

#### C. MSUAASF President's Report (M. Iverson)

- As the academic year wraps up, ASF members are gearing up for orientation and registration over the summer. There has been significant effort to move orientation online. Passion and dedication are evident throughout our membership. ASF members have put in long hours and a lot of work to serve our students as we jump into busy months ahead.
- ASF members are watching our legislators closely and attending a variety of town halls including one tonight regarding our contracts.
- ASF is proud of J. Egeland. J. Egeland was also the Board of Trustees nominee. M. Iverson is happy that the current contract allows her to get monetarily recognized.
- We are also watching for information from MMB to see if they will lift the cap on vacation hours until December 31<sup>st</sup>. M. Iverson appreciates that they recognize the difficulty of taking vacation at this time.
- Our ASF executive team will be going through transitions since our election was completed. We elected D. Schulz as Vice President, O. Gonzalez as Negotiator, and K. Hodgden as Secretary. M. Slotemaker will continue as Treasurer, M. Weister will move into the President's role, and M. Iverson will be Past President. M. Iverson is excited about upcoming team
- M. Iverson also wants to recognize our outgoing members, including G. Maahs-Zurbey as our at-large member, S. Frasier and J. Krosch as co-Membership-Chairs, T Stokes-Hernandez as Alt. Negotiator, C. Nelson who served multiple years as negotiator and alt. negotiator, and R. Tanquist who recently served three years as Secretary and is now termed out, but is pursuing a role in State ASF. M. Iverson extends her thanks to everyone, as they have served their positions well and is looking forward to our new members seeking leadership roles.
- M. Iverson thanks the ASF team and management. While her role as president was unexpected when J. Van Boxel left, she appreciates everyone's' patience and compromise as they worked through unique challenges and experiences.

#### D. Vice President Student Affairs & Enrollment Management Report (D. Jones)

- D. Jones thanked M. Iverson and the leadership team.
- 13,900 students currently enrolled in spring, which is identical to last year.

- We are up FYE 3.6% (38 students) for summer, largely due to hard marketing efforts encouraging students to take advantage of summer opportunities.
- There has been a decline in fall international student applications, down 57% since they can't get visa appointments. They are going to schedule appointments in July, but it's unrealistic to expect we will match last year's international student enrollment numbers.
- Overall applications are down .7%, which is heavily impacted by international applications.
- Domestic first-year students are up 2.6% for fall
- Cabinet approved a huge marketing blitz. Now is the time to remind everyone we're a great option. Many students and families are reaching out to admissions because they're considering applying closer to home. Since colleges might all be online in the fall, families recognize it makes more sense to choose a value institution. D. Jones thanks advising and admissions staff for their efforts to help get behind this challenge.

#### E. HR Topics (S. Barrett)

- Human Resources Vacancies
  - Vacancy list attached.
  - Volume is down due to circumstances.
  - Contact S. Barrett with questions.
- Workplace Environment Investigations
  - Workplace environment list attached.
  - Volume is also down.
- COVID-19 Leave
  - We have not received guidance from MMB yet on the vacation cap issue, but it will be coming soon. S. Barrett is hopeful that vacation caps will be relaxed so that people can utilize vacation when it makes more sense to do so.
  - The COVID-19 administrative leave was a benefit created in April due to Governor Walz's executive order. B. Breck and the HR team are currently administering it. Individuals using COVID-19 administrative leave is modest, with only 3-3.5% of employees using COVID paid leave. The average for the system is 3-4%. Usage of this leave is spread evening across the campus, with most leave requests relating to school closures and employee health situations.
  - Since the emergency will be over at some point, S. Barrett and his team are looking at how we transition out of paid administrative leave and how to transition work back to campus. They are receiving guidance from the system office and will do transitions as fairly as they can.
  - D. Schulz asked if we will be receiving an email regarding summer hours as we have in the past. S. Barrett answered that the email hasn't gone out yet since so many individuals are already flexing their time due to COVID, but there will be a communication going out soon related to summer.
  - R. Straka added that for employees from one bargaining unit that are still required to be on campus, they will not be switching from night shift to day shift to continue to reduce the individuals on campus at the same time.
  - There was an additional question on if the use of personal days will be extended past June 30<sup>th</sup>. S. Barrett is currently unsure, but it is being discussed with MMB. HR is advocating for both to be relaxed.

## II. Discussion Items

### A. COVID-19 Update (M. Cecil & Cabinet)

- M. Cecil is proud of how we've dealt with this situation and the remarkable changes we've made working together.
- Summer enrollment is showing positive results for our efforts. Three weeks ago we were down 20% in summer enrollment and now we're above last year.
- There have been new feedback loops from L. Akey's division that have provided useful information on what students want and need. M. Cecil and his team were able to take this information to adapt the summer schedule (ex. The physics department adding lab classes). It is truly remarkable that in the

midst of a crisis and an all online schedule we're up in enrollment. When we work together and listen to our students we can do positive things.

- M. Johnson and the IT team are outfitting all classes as Zoom classes. This way we'll be able to have students in classes in-person with smaller numbers, while also broadcasting these classes on Zoom to include audiences that would otherwise be excluded to allow them to participate in classes.
- We have the ability to create innovative delivery methods for courses to make faculty and students as comfortable as they can be. Other campuses don't have the ability to adapt in the same way, which creates a positive opportunity for us.
- Faculty are trained to stand in front of classrooms and lead discussions, and not necessarily trained to do online teaching. This hybrid model allows them to play to their strengths instead of just moving to asynchronous online courses. This initiative includes faculty, staff, ASF members, and students.
- Once academics are figured out, we can then create plans for everything else to keep everyone safe.
- Outfitting classrooms with Zoom allows us to easily transition between the three possibilities for fall and it provides our students with comfort wherever they want to be.
- M. Iverson asked if there is a timeline for when that decision will be made. M. Cecil answered that July 1<sup>st</sup> is currently the key date (however this may change). Since we don't know what the final call will be we have to plan for all three scenarios.
- D. Schulz asked if there will be a tuition difference of Zoom verses in-person classes. M. Cecil said that they would be the same price, because it would be remote instruction so it would not have the online differential. However, that will be a continued conversation within the system.

#### B. Budget (Rick Straka)

- The state is currently looking at 2.4 billion deficit. While the state has a rainy day fund of 2.3 billion, they will likely not use the entire rainy day fund to cover the deficit. They may use the accounting trick commonly used during T. Pawlenty's term, where they delay the last payment to K-12 schools to make some of the deficit go away in the current year as a short term solution.
- Looking forward, MNSU has a structural deficit of 2-3 million dollars and we are receiving \$300,000 less in state appropriations in 2021. Winona and Moorhead have 6 million dollar deficit, and St. Cloud has a 13 million deficit all before COVID hit due to structural issues.
- Any impact of COVID will be above our already 3 million dollar projected deficit.
- The U of M is freezing tuition which pressures our system to freeze tuition, which will further hurt our budget. It is clear that the state does not have the money to pay us for the tuition freeze.
- Even if we get one time money to cover the tuition freeze for next year, the deficit will carry over, because raising tuition 3% the following year won't cover two years' worth of inflation.
- There is a possible impact on our general fund with Residential Life Room and Board refunds. We have processed six million dollars in refunds, which is the entire Residential Life reserve. Looking to next year, if we have to social distance to one person per room we will lose 40-50% of our Residential Life income, 40-50 million dollars which will wipe out our reserve. Best case scenario is normal occupancy in Residence Halls. System would have to turn to the general fund.
- We could handle a 5% enrollment decline, but if we add the pressure of 50% to 0% Residence Hall occupancy, we could burn through our reserve faster than anything we had planned for.
- The CARES Act does provide emergency institutional aid. R. Straka suggests we use our institutional aid to pay back the revenue fund to help fill our reserve. This is the across the board opinion of CFOs. It has not received presidential or board approval yet.
- Moving forward, we need to make investments in areas with high student demand that we are not meeting to get a good return of student re-enrollment. We also need to still put money into marketing to have students commit here as an attractive alternative to their original plans.
- We're going to have to make some adjustments in our budget since we've already had three years of slow declines in enrollment. When enrollment is 70% of our institutional budget we have to react.
- The real budgetary issues will occur in 2022-2023, since including inflation we were already projected to be at a deficit those years before COVID occurred. We need to look over the horizon regarding the state's economic position in two years.
- The good news is that we're re-enrolling students well. If we can offer a residential life experience there is great momentum. We need to keep an eye on the future and react to the changes we've seen over the last few years from both the state and our enrollment levels.

- C. Nelson asked what the student fee structure will look like since students will be online and many MSUAASF positions are funded by student fees. R. Straka answered that they don't plan on changing the current student fee structure. However, there is pressure nationally to do so. Locally, we haven't had a flood of students questioning student fees, just a trickle. Nationally, there have been lawsuits over student fees targeted towards major institutions with big endowments. Since there was a push towards transparency on student fees, students see them as user fees instead of taxes. We currently have no plans to change funding or how we're charging courses.
- R. Davenport added that we don't know the status of what athletics will be. Worst case scenario we won't have a season at all or we may have to start the season late. This impacts us in a variety of ways. For example, will student athletes hold out on attending college next year or will they go somewhere else that will allow them to play? We have just under 600 athletes and most are here because they want to be an athlete. We can only conjecture at this point.
- L. Akey is involved in student success and under her workload is planning for the university. We have a number of goals we need to achieve. L. Akey is focusing on student success and planning for areas with the greatest positive impact for campus. There will be significant planning this summer. There are a lot of forces besides the budget that will take a lot of hours of focus to help position us as a university moving forward in the fall.
- We are looking at tactical things we have to do, tactical things we are doing, and envisioning how we deliver our academic core. We are looking at how we use this as a strategic opportunity to advance ourselves and set ourselves up to be successful well beyond 2022-2023. We will use these opportunities and challenges to drive us forward. We are looking at innovating things that will serve us and our students well beyond COVID-19.

#### C. CARES ACT Distribution Plan (MSUAASF)

- M. Iverson asked more clarification on CARES Act funding distribution.
- R. Straka answered that the interpretation of the CARES Act changes frequently and may change again.
- There are three basic areas of funding under the CARES Act.
- The CARES Act funding for students is meant to cover expenses that students ran into transitioning from face-to-face to online learning. It is not meant to go towards lost wages. Students are eligible for CARES Act funding if they are Title IV aid eligible (this excludes DACA students, international students, students not meeting SAPS, students not registered with selective service, etc.). 100% online students are also not eligible for these funds. Staff are currently running lists to determine who is eligible.
- Approximately 10,000 students will receive \$295 dollars apiece. Pell eligible students (approximately 2,500+ students) will receive an additional \$540).
- There is also \$180,000 for students who can document additional expenses above the \$295 already given that they incurred while transitioning to online.
- They are working on how to communicate with both eligible and ineligible students. The goal is to award these funds next week, and to create an application process for the additional funds moving forward.
- They are consistently receiving new guidance, so things may change.
- M. Iverson asked how institutional CARES Act funding will be used. R. Straka answered that there has been guidance that we can reimburse ourselves for Residential Life refund costs, which would be R. Straka's recommendation. However, they are not sure if they have to submit a plan to the chancellor for review. They haven't submitted for this portion of the funding yet, they will do so next week or the following week. They have to figure out the mechanics for how to pull in this funding.

#### D. Maverick Online Orientation & Registration (D. Jones)

- Since we are unable to do traditional campus visits we will be transitioning to a fully online experience. We are looking to personalize the experience while using technology and provide a concierge experience to get students connected and feeling like Mavericks.
- They are moving away from traditional orientation dates and instead putting all students in a big group. Students will receive an email and be mailed a letter on May 18<sup>th</sup> inviting them to orientation and asking them how we can best support them. Students will then receive invitations starting June 1<sup>st</sup> for waves of students to come through the online orientation program in D2L.

- L. Akey team will move students through the advising and registration experience. The key objectives and outcomes are ensuring that students have meaningful interactions with an advising and registration team member. They are altering patterns to allow one-on-one or small group experiences and designing the process to create high quality fall schedules through course availability and students' course needs.
- They are ensuring we have the right courses for our first year students so they have a schedule they're excited about that allows them to be successful.
- They are emphasizing students making meaningful connections with the university.
- They want students to continue to connect with us throughout summer. Those willing to step in as coaching and advising champions will continue to outreach to students after registration to express how excited we are to have them at MNSU. This is an opportunity to make a huge difference and to demonstrate that we care.
- We are creating content to deliver this at a distance and leveraging the MavConnect platform.
- D. Jones added that the word opportunity is fitting because orientation hasn't changed in over 10 years. We are thinking through what students need to know and when they need to know it so that they can be connected to the university. We don't want each module to look identical. The challenge is to get everything ready by June 1.
- They are closely partnering with ITS and everyone being open and creative. We can't have all departments doing the same thing.
- M. Iverson expressed her appreciation to leadership to make this possible.

E. Common Bell & Coordinated Scheduling Recommendations (L. Akey)

- The final consultation recommendations were brought forward in March. The recommendations and feedback are on the university website. They are completing the consultation process to give the final recommendations to the cabinet and the University President.
- Many ASF members served on the three work groups.
- M. Iverson stated that we have received no additional formal feedback.

F. Policy Consultation & Review Update (B. Martensen)

- The Policy Review and Consultation Committee has finished the final consultation process. Policies are being sent to drafters to create final version of the policy to then bring forward for R. Davenport to sign.
- The policies will be available tomorrow for review and a campus-wide email will be sent. After a week, the policies will then be sent to R. Davenport to sign.